

REMARKS

This application is a divisional of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/955,909, filed September 18, 2001, now issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,706,497, which is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application No. 08/911,393, filed August 14, 1997 ("the parent application"), now issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,323,008. This application is being filed to prosecute an invention that was not elected in the parent application.

Claims

During prosecution of the parent application, by way of a telephone conversation with the Examiner on June 12, 1998, Applicants elected to prosecute the claims of Group I, claims 1-36. Applicants' election of Group I claims and the Examiner's restriction of the claims of the parent application into three (3) groups were set forth in detail in the Office Action issued on July 17, 1998 (Paper No. 4) in the parent application.

The present application was filed to prosecute the claims of Group III, claims 45 and 46, as set forth in the restriction requirement in the Office Action issued on July 17, 1998. By way of the instant Preliminary Amendment, Applicants elect to prosecute the claims of Group III, claims 45 and 46, and hereby cancel, without prejudice, claims 1-44. Accordingly, upon entry of the present amendment, claims 45 and 46 are under consideration in the present application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the cancelled claims in continuing and divisional applications.

Specification

Applicants have amended the specification herein to update the priority information by inserting the proper cross-reference to related applications. This amendment is clerical in nature and, therefore, no new matter has been added by way of this amendment.

Summary

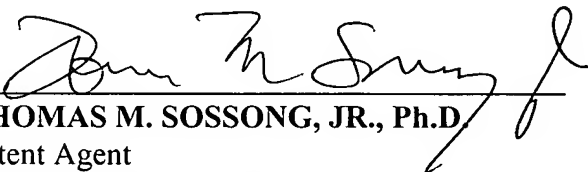
Applicants respectfully submit that the specification has been amended herein merely to update the priority information in the application and to cancel claims. No new matter has been added.

Favorable examination of the claims is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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(Date)

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